



**Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Land & Water Quality  
O&M Newsletter**

December 2006

A monthly newsletter for wastewater discharge licensees, treatment facility operators, and associated persons

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The first, and actually the main driving force for the conversion this year, was at the request of CSO communities. Some people requested a change in the report because they found it frustrating to put the data into a Word document, as it threw off the document formatting. Converting the report to Excel resolves this issue and it is easy to just tab from one input area of the report to the next.

The second reason for the change is data integrity. Previously the Word reports that we received were printed out and the data from them entered manually into our Access database. Obviously this time consuming and can lead to input errors. By designing the report in Excel, electronic submission of the report now allows us to upload it directly into Access, saving time and helping to ensure data integrity.

**Combined Sewer Overflow  
Annual Progress Reports**

Each year communities with permitted combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are required to submit a report to the Department. The report is due by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and reports CSO information for the previous calendar year.

This year the Annual Report has undergone a face lift. Actually it is more of a body lift than a face lift! The contents of the report have changed very little, but the report has been converted from Word to Excel. This has been done for two reasons.

The Department's data management unit is going through the final process of reviewing the Excel version and making sure that there are no issues with Access. The new reporting forms should be sent out by Christmas and will be located on the CSO web page [Combined Sewer Overflow Program, Maine Department of Environmental Protection](#).

Information from the annual reports is used by the Department in a number of ways. Not only is it used to assess the individual community's progress, but also to assess the statewide progress that is made in improving water quality. Financial information from the reports is shared with EPA to assess future wastewater needs and the State's portion of any available Federal grants that provide funding for the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF).

Some of the information requested is used to report the community's efforts to implement EPA's Nine Minimum Controls (NMC). These controls are CSO abatement best management practices (BMPs) that are relatively cost effective to implement.

The annual report also contains information on precipitation, CSO activity, and CSO discharge volumes. This information helps to establish overall trends in CSO abatement progress. After a record breaking wet year in 2005, I am eagerly awaiting the 2006 information.

Overall I have been pleased with the quality of the reports and the timeliness of their submission. Please continue to get the reports in by March 1<sup>st</sup>, as this information is required in some Federal and State reports that are due around that time.

I hope the new report form will make submission of the data a little easier for the CSO communities. Please let me know if there are any further suggestions for improving the form.

***John True***

## **DMR-QA Study 26 Update**

Thank you to all wastewater treatment facility operators that participated in the 2006 Discharge Monitoring Report – Quality Assurance Study 26. I have received the evaluations from the various provider laboratories. As in 2005, I did not require copies of the permittee "data packages". You should always maintain copies of data packages sent to provider laboratories in your files for at least three years.

Permittees receiving "Not Acceptable" results on evaluations should have investigated the causes of any discrepancies reported by their provider laboratories. The causes and any corrective actions to prevent laboratory errors in the future should have been detailed in a letter sent to Ken Jones by December 8, 2006. A copy of this letter should be sent to your compliance inspector as well. We both want to help you improve your laboratory work. Technical assistance is available from DEP staff to WWTF operators for lab issues as needed. Call your facility inspector or me (287-4869) to discuss problems with your routine lab procedures.

You should also explore any "Check For Error" results on your provider lab evaluation report. This would mean that these results are marginal at present. You should try to optimize the lab procedure now before it perhaps becomes "Not Acceptable" next time.

The vast majority of Maine WWTF labs received “Acceptable” evaluations again in 2006. Congratulations to all of you laboratory technicians that are doing good lab work out there. Your regional compliance inspector and I appreciate your efforts to report accurate DMR data.

**Ken Jones**  
**State DMR-QA Coordinator**



### ***For Practice***

1. To get good nitrification in an activated sludge unit, the sludge should be:
  - a. Bad smelling and black in color
  - b. Brown in color with a dark brown foam
  - c. Brown in color with a musty odor
  - d. Settle to 900 mls in a one liter cylinder in 30 minutes.
2. Which sludge is the easiest to dewater
  - a. Raw secondary sludge
  - b. Conditioned secondary sludge
  - c. Raw primary sludge
  - d. Sludge from the Kraus Process
3. How many cubic yards of material are removed from a ditch 125 feet long if the depth is 18 feet and the width is 9 feet?
  - a. 128
  - b. 400
  - c. 750
  - d. 20,000
4. What chemical is used in titration to indicate a pH change from acid to base?
  - a. sodium chloride
  - b. sodium hypochlorite
  - c. phenolphthalein
  - d. sodium thiosulphate

### ***Approved Training***

December 14, 2006 in Augusta, ME -  
Advanced Microsoft Excel – Sponsored  
by JETCC – (207)-253-8020 –  
Approved for 6 hours  
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December 12-13, 2006 in Freeport, ME  
– MRWA Annual Conference –  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for various hours  
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January 9, 2007 in Caribou, ME –  
Selecting the Right Pump - Sponsored  
by MRWA – (207)-725-6965 –  
Approved for 5 hours  
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January 10, 2007 in Ellsworth, ME –  
Selecting the Right Pump - Sponsored  
by MRWA – (207)-725-6965 –  
Approved for 5 hours  
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January 10, 2007 in Norway, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours  
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January 11, 2007 in Old Town, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours

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January 17, 2007 in Machias, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours

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January 18, 2007 in Waterville, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours

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January 24, 2007 in Presque Isle, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours

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January 25, 2007 in Rockland, ME –  
Biochemical Oxygen Demand -  
Sponsored by MRWA – (207)-725-6965  
Approved for 5 hours

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February 7, 2007 in Wells, ME –  
Selecting the Right Pump - Sponsored  
by MRWA – (207)-725-6965 –  
Approved for 5 hours

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February 8, 2007 in Brunswick, ME –  
Selecting the Right Pump - Sponsored  
by MRWA – (207)-725-6965 –  
Approved for 5 hours

Note: JETCC stands for Joint  
Environmental Training Coordinating  
Committee  
MRWA stands for Maine Rural Water  
Association  
MWWCA stands for Maine Wastewater  
Control Association  
NEIWPCA stands for New England  
Interstate Water Pollution Control  
Commission

WPETC stands for Wright Pierce  
Environmental Training Center.

### **Fall 2006 Exam**

The fall 2006 Wastewater Operator  
Certification Exam was given on  
Wednesday -- November 15, 2006. The  
results should be available by Christmas.  
If you took the test this month, please be  
patient! We will get the results out as  
soon as we have them but correcting the  
exams is done out of State and we have  
no control over that process.

If you missed the deadline for the fall  
exam, you can sign up to take the test in  
the spring. The spring exam will be  
given in the usual locations on  
Wednesday, May 16, 2007.

### **Answers to *For Practice*:**

1. c. In general, a properly operating  
activated sludge treatment  
system will have sludge that is  
brown in color with a slightly  
musty, but not foul-smelling  
odor.
2. c. Raw, primary sludge contains  
more non-volatile solids that  
have a higher density and are,  
therefore, easier to settle and  
dewater.
3. c.  $125\% \times 18\% \times 9 = 20,250$  cubic  
feet + 27 cubic feet/cubic yard =  
750 cubic yards.
4. c. Phenolphthalein turns from  
colorless to a violet/pink when  
the pH rises above 7.0.

*Happy Holidays!*